

Candlelight Christian Fellowship

Hebrews (Chapter 2) (Lesson 2)

Hebrews 2 (NKJV)

“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? 5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: ‘What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’ For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying: ‘I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.’ 13 And again: ‘I will put My trust in Him.’” And again: ‘Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.’ 14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15 and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. 16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. 17 Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

The Captain and His Sons

Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of Man, the Son of God. He is the image and fullness of the invisible God. In His incarnation, He *“was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death [and was] crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone”* (vs. 9). Jesus tasted death for everyone so that all who trust in Him may pass from death unto life. He alone provides this promise and its blessings (see John 5:24). *“For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings”* (vs. 10). His incarnational act and willing sacrifice as *“Son of Man”* identified Him with the sons of men. In order to do this, He was made *“a little lower than the angels.”* This humbling act provided Him with the identification He desired as *“Son of Man”* and therefore allowed Him to provide mankind with the hope of glory. By Jesus’ work, many sons and daughters are brought into God’s family, and thus promised an eternal dwelling in the house of God.

Made Perfect Through Sufferings?

The fact that the author says Jesus was made perfect through sufferings does not imply a personal imperfection prior to those sufferings. Jesus' perfection was not an earned attribute—but was the manifestation of His incarnational person and work. Jesus' sufferings perfected (completed) His *work* of redemption. It was the necessary sacrifice made on our behalf, for the blood of bulls and goats could never take away sins (see Hebrews 10:4). Jesus' blood, the blood of the only begotten of the Father, is the only blood sufficient to do so.

Our "*captain*" is the one who opened the door (He is the door—see John 10:1–15) and leads us to and through that door into salvation. (See John 12:32) The expression "*captain*" simply means trailblazer but is used to indicate heroic action. Therefore, one could suggest that our "*hero*" blazes a trail to, and leads us to, the door by which we enter into all He has provided.

Unity with the Messiah

Jesus, "the captain of our salvation" and "hero of our faith," is the One and only who, through death, tasted death for every man. He conquered death and did so after announcing the event Himself. As the death conquering King, He is worthy of eternal glory. He Who made the world and all that is in it "*for whom are all things and by whom are all things*" receives all the glory. Furthermore, He made all things, and sustains all things, that He may receive all things and share those things with those He has and will redeem. "*For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one*" (vs. 11a). We are of Him, and to Him, and for Him! We have been united together with Him, and "*for [this] reason He is not ashamed to call [us] brethren*" (vs. 11b). We are the family of God!

In Fulfillment of Prophecy

When the author attributed to Jesus the citation "*I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You*" (vs. 12), He was reciting from Psalm 22 which identifies Jesus with the Psalm—thus proving that the passage is Messianic and attributing Messiahship to Jesus (see Psalm 22). The brethren are the redeemed Jews. By attribution we may now consider ourselves included as well. We too (Church Age saints) are Jesus' brethren.

When Jesus was on the cross, He prayed the words recorded in this Psalm. (I suggest that the Psalm, like so many others, is the written prayers of Jesus, penned before His incarnation.) God, Who is not limited by time and is Himself altogether outside of time (for time is a part of creation), gave the inspiration to David, who penned this as his own prayer. It is of note that he may not have been aware of the fact that he was prophetically uttering these words concerning the Messiah.

The author adds, "*And again: 'I will put My trust in Him'*" (vs. 13a), citing Isaiah 8:17 in relationship to Jesus' trust in the Father, "*'And again: 'Here am I and the children whom God has given Me'*" (vs. 13b), citing Isaiah 8:18. Herein the author is reiterating the Messianic application from a passage that also identifies the offensive nature of the Gospel among the many Hebrews who may be tempted to reject this Gospel and trust Jesus as Messiah.

Earlier in the same passage from Isaiah, we read, "*He will be as a sanctuary, but a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to both the houses of Israel, as a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem*" (Isaiah 8:14). There is no doubt that this passage refers to Jesus, for even to the Romans Paul recites it as does Peter when writing his epistles (see Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:8).

Death and the Devil Destroyed

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (vs. 14–15). As the result of Jesus’ incarnation and identification with man, He not only tasted death for us, but as the suffering servant and *“captain of our salvation,”* He destroyed the works of the Devil—and will destroy the Devil himself. Furthermore, and as a result, believers are no longer in bondage to fear. Believers are not bound by death, but have *“passed from death unto life”* (see John 5:24). We can face death with confidence, knowing that death has lost its sting and the grave has lost its victory (see 1 Corinthians 15:53–55).

The climatic result of Jesus’ work has yet to come to fruition—it is yet future. However, it is the certain (soon to be realized) promise all who trust Jesus will both see and experience (see Revelation 20:10 and 21:4).

No Angel or Demon

The work of Jesus was not intended to be nor is it redemptive for the angelic populations. This includes both the fallen and those who have remained faithful to God. The faithful need no redemption. Lucifer and those who have joined his rebellion are not offered nor promised redemption. *“For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham”* (vs. 16). The seed of Abraham in this case is a reference to the nation and people Israel: the proper Abrahamic offspring through Isaac and Jacob. The aid supplied is the salvation offered by God through Jesus the Messiah.

The Seed

When writing to the Galatians (a primarily Gentile region), Paul referred to Jesus as the “Seed” of Abraham (through which all of Israel may be saved). By association therefore, one might suggest that the aid promised to Israel is also carried forward to the Gentiles who trust Jesus for salvation as the result of their being placed in Him. *“Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ”* (Galatians 3:16). And, *“if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”* (Galatians 3:29). Therefore, the Hebrews who are given *“aid”* remain supported, but also the Gentiles who trust Jesus for salvation receive the same.

Replacement Theology? No Way!

Some have suggested that the Hebrews have been rejected by God and that the Church has replaced Israel. Oh, how wrong they are! Jesus was and is the Messiah of Israel. Those who trust Him for Salvation will receive all He has intended for them. For, *“in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people”* (vs. 17). The *“people”* in view here are the descendents of Abraham. The *“sins of the people”* are forgiven and cleansed when they trust Jesus for the *“aid”* they need. Those who *“give the more earnest heed”* to these *“things”* (vs. 1) will enjoy all the benefits provided in Jesus: their prophesied *“merciful and faithful High Priest.”* Moreover, those who are tempted to avoid conflict, persecution, or rejection when trusting in Jesus are encouraged to fully grasp who and all He is—by remembering *“that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted”* (vs. 18).

Moving on from the Old Covenant promises to the now present promised One carries a temporal cost every Jewish person who has turned to Jesus knows all too well. Many suffer complete rejection from family, friends, business associates, et al. The temptation to avoid conflict, etc., and remain in a watch and wait mode under the now annulled Old Covenant are the very things the author warns about in verse 1. He told them, *“Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away”* (vs. 1). The “we” obviously included the author and the Jews he was addressing. May I suggest that all men give *“earnest heed”*?

Questions:

- 1) **True or False:** Our *“captain”* (Jesus) is the one who as our hero blazes a trail to, and leads us through, the door by which we enter into all He has provided.
- 2) **True or False:** Psalm 22 is likely a prayer penned by David but the record of Jesus’ prayer from the cross—written before the time.
- 3) **True or False:** Believers have *“passed from death unto life.”* We can face death with confidence, knowing that death has lost its sting and the grave has lost its victory.
- 4) **True or False:** Lucifer and the angels who have joined his rebellion have been offered redemption.
- 5) **True or False:** The Hebrews have been rejected by God, and the Church has replaced Israel.

Notes